



PATENT
Customer No. 22,852
Attorney Docket No. 04329.2574-00

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:

Itsuko SAKAI et al.

Application No.: 09/877,145

Filed: June 11, 2001

For: PLASMA PROCESSING METHOD

Group Art Unit: 1762

Examiner: Timothy H. Meeks

Commissioner for Patents
Washington, DC 20231

Sir:

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Prior to the examination of the above application on the merits, please amend
this application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 18, 23, 26, and 29 as follows:

18. (Amended) A plasma processing method, in which a process gas is
introduced into an evacuated process chamber for forming a thin film on the surface of a
substrate, comprising:

introducing again at least a part of the process gas exhausted from said process
chamber into said process chamber while processing said thin film attached to said
surface within said process chamber;